

Sphex viatica Linné, 1758 = Anoplius viaticus (L.) (Hym. Pomp.)

by

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It was Richards 1935 : p. 165 n. 76, who last examined the type of *Sphex viatica* Linné. He came to the following conclusion :

The type of *Sphex viatica* Linnaeus, 1758 is preserved in his collection at Burlington House. It is a female of *Podalonia hirsuta* (Scopoli, 1763). Linnaeus himself says the insect preys on caterpillars, so there is no excuse for using "*viatica*" as the specific name of a *Psammocharid*.

However, it was not mentioned by Richards, that this type-specimen does not agree with the original description of Linnaeus (S. N. ed. 10, 1758 : p. 570 n. 10), which runs as follows :

Abdomine subsessili.

10. *Sphex viatica*, *Sphex nigra*, alis fuscis, abdomine antice ferrugineo : cingulis nigris.

Fn. svec. 977.

Amoen. acad. 3. p. 330.

Raj. ins. 254. n.g. et jun. 22.

Vespa miraculosa.

Frisch ins. 2. t. I. f. 13.

Habitat in Europa ; fodit cuniculum, occidit larvam Phalaenae, attrahit, sepe lit, imposito ovo, obturat.

Before Richards 1935, Haupt in 1926/27 : p. 308 n. 9 rejected the name *viatica* for the black-banded pompilid saying :

Pompilus viaticus L. = *Sphex viatica* L. ist kein *Pompilus* sondern = *Psammophila hirsuta* Scop., die jetzt *Ps. viatica* L. heißen musz. Auch Dahlbom verstand diese Art darunter.

Kohl 1906 : p. 279 considered the matter amply in his monograph on the genus *Ammophila* Kirby in a note to *Ammophila hirsuta* (Scop.). He wrote :

Lange Zeit stritten sich zwei Aculeaten um den Besitz der Linné-schen Artbezeichnung "*viatica*" ("*Sphex viatica*"), nämlich eine unserer gemeinsten europäischen *Pompilus*-Arten und die hier besprochene *Ammophila*. Viele Autoren wenden für letztere den Namen *viatica* an, was auch der Bemerkung gegenüber, dass man die Linné-sche Type einzusehen Gelegenheit gehabt habe, als entschieden unrichtig erklärt werden musz. da Linné seine *Sphex viatica* (Faun. Suec., n. 1651 und Syst. Nat., I, p. 934) nicht unter die Gruppe der Arten mit gestielten ("abdomine petiolo elongato"), sondern unter die mit fast sitzendem Hinterleib ("abdomine subsessile") stellt. Es wird wohl niemand einfallen, den Hinterleib unserer *Ammophila*, bei der der Stiel, mit unbewaffnetem Auge besichtigt, eine Linie lang erscheint, subsessil zu nennen. Zudem sagt Linné ausdrücklich „cingulis nigris“, was nie auf diese *Ammophila*, wohl aber immer auf den erwähnten *Pompilus* passt. So lange der Text zur Entscheidung vollkommen ausreicht, können Typensammlungen, da sie vor Irrtümern nie ganz geschützt sind, keine Berücksichtigung finden.

For many reasons we have to adopt Kohl's conception of the matter, viz. :

1. The reasons given by Kohl, cited above.

2. As to Kohl's suggestion regarding type-collections, Richards 1935 : p. 143 n. 1 admits :

Few of the specimens in Linnaeus' collection can be regarded as types in the modern sense of the word. Linnaeus himself probably often discarded specimens, added them to his series and exchanged labels. In the most favourable circumstances, a Linnaean "type" is a specimen agreeing with the original description and bearing a label in Linnaeus' handwriting. Some specimens with such labels, however, disagree with the original descriptions. A considerable latitude can, therefore, be allowed in deciding what to regard as types, so as to necessitate the least number of nomenclatorial changes.

3. As to the argument of Richards, that Linnaeus himself says the insect preys on caterpillars, it has to be realised, that Linnaeus' observation in this case need not have been based on the actual specimen from which the description was drawn up. Nobody will reject the name *sabulosa* for the common *Ammophila*, because of Linnaeus' description (F. S. ed. 2, 1761 : p. 411 n. 1648):

Habitat in terra sabulosa, quam fodit, inque ea sepelit araneam.

4. Both the description and the figure of Frisch 1721 : p. 11 Tab. 1 f. 13, placed in the synonymy by Linnaeus in 1758, fully agree with the black-banded pompilid.

5. Dahlbom 1845 : p. 19 argues (and after him Haupt 1926/27 did so too) that his *Psammophila viatica* is the true *Sphex viatica* of Linnaeus according to the description (i.e. not according to the diagnosis) of Linnaeus in the F.S. ed. 2, 1761 : p. 412 n. 1651 and also according to the examination of the Linnaean type by Shuckard. But Dahlbom's arguments too neglect the disagreements of the type with the diagnosis, even with the diagnosis of 1761 (*cingulis nigris*).

In this connection it is remarkable, that Dahlbom 1845 : p. 57 did not hesitate, also to use the name *viatica* for the pompilid (syn. : *Sphex viatica* Lin. Fn. 1651, in diagnosi).

6. *Sphex fusca* was first published by Linnaeus in 1761 (F.S. ed. 2 : p. 412 n. 1652). The diagnosis, the description and the type-specimen (the latter according to Richards 1935 : p. 160 n. 52) agree with the black-banded pompilid.

In comparing the diagnosis and description of *fusca* with those of n. 1651 (*viatica*), the supposition is justified, that in 1761 Linnaeus confused his *Sphex viatica* of 1758 with the sphecid *Podalonia hirsuta* (Scop.), which may be concluded from the following extracts :

(*viatica*)

n. 1651.

nigra pubescens.

(*fusca*)

n. 1652.

thorax laevis.

abdominis segmenta tria prima

ferruginea marginibus nigris.

maxillae minores quam in Sph.

viatica.

Whereas Linnaeus omitted to remove sub n. 1651 (*viatica*) the words :

cingulis nigris.

abdomen vix petiolatum

Frisch ins. 2. t. 1. f. 13.

Anyhow, the tenth edition of the *Systema Naturae* of 1758 is

now the starting point of nomenclature, and therein *Sphex viatica* was founded on the common pompilid "abdomine subsessile, cingulis nigris" of which Frisch gave an unmistakable figure. *Sphex fusca* L., 1761 has to be considered as its synonym.

7. As to his point of view mentioned above sub 5, Dahlbom 1845: p. 19 also referred to de Geer 1771: p. 830 n. 6. But in his days de Geer did not know the International rules of nomenclature and referred to the "latest" edition of Linnaeus' Fauna of 1761 and so overlooked the confusion, just pointed out sub 6.

8. It is more likely, that Linnaeus discovered the black-banded pompilid — which is abundant from early spring to late autumn — before he met with the sphecid, which may hardly be called common.

9. The name "*viatica*" strikingly agrees with the preference of the pompilid to keep on sandy roads.

10. The literature in which the pompilid is called *viaticus* is much more extensive than the references, where the sphecid is called by that name. So it seems not too late to use the name for the black-banded pompilid, according to code and traditional usage.

References.

- Dahlbom (A.G.) 1845. Hymenoptera Europaea praecipue borealia, I. Berlin.
 Frisch (J.L.) 1721. Beschreibung von allerley Insecten in Teutsch-Land, II. Berlin.
 de Geer (C.) 1771. Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire des Insectes, Tome II, partie 2. Stockholm.
 Haupt (H.) 1926/27. Monographie der Psammocharidae (Pompilidae) von Mittel-, Nord- und Osteuropa. Beihefte D.E.Z., 1926/27.
 Kohl (F.F.) 1906. Die Ammophilinen der paläarktischen Region. Ann. nat. Hofmus. Wien, 21: 228—382.
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Postscriptum.

Recently V.S.L. Pate 1946 [The generic names of the spider wasps (Psammocharidae olim Pompilidae) and their type species. Trans. Am. Ent. Soc., 72: 65—137]: 127 note 202 has given reasons for not considering valid Opinion 166 of the Intern. Comm. Zool. Nomencl. (1945), in which *Psammochares* Latr. 1796 was suppressed and *Pompilus pulcher* F. 1798 was fixed as the type of *Pompilus* F. 1798. If Pate's point of view is to be accepted (a statement on this matter by the I.C.Z.N. is highly desirable!) *Pompilus viaticus* F., as designated by Latreille 1810, is to be regarded as the genotype of *Pompilus* F. 1798.

But *Pompilus viaticus* Fabricius is the same as *Sphex viatica* L. 1758 nec 1761, for Fabricius diagnose mentions the "cingulis nigris" and refers to the figure of Frisch. The species in Fabricius' collection at Kiel bearing this name is the common spider wasp (Dahlbom 1845: XVIII). Fabricius' reference to Linnaeus 1761 is immaterial and apparently influenced by the confusion caused by Linnaeus himself (compare above sub 6).

So I cannot accept Pate's suggestion (l.c.: 102 note 130) that *Pompilus* F. (the genotype being a sphecid) should be referable to the Sphecidae. If we are to accept Pate's rejection of Opinion 166, *Pompilus* F. 1798 should be sunk into the synonymy of *Psammochares* Latr. 1796, being isogenotypic with that genus through synonymy (genotype of *Psammochares* is *Sphex fusca* L. 1761 by designation of Latreille 1803, Nouv. Dict. Hist. Nat., 21: 158).

Den Dolder, Dolderscheweg 42.